Claims

1.      A method for directing a packet entity. said method comprising the steps of:
receiving a packet entity ;

5       checking if the packet entity contains information relating to the direction of said entity;

directing said packet entity in accordance with said information if said information is contained in said packet entity; and

storing at least part of said packet entity until a further packet entity is
10   received containing information relating to the direction is received and forwarding said stored packet entity when said further packet entity is received in accordance with said information.


2.      A method as claimed in claim 1. wherein said method is arranged to direct a
15   packet entity to a required bearer of a plurality of bearers.


3.      A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said packet entity is a fragmented packet.


20   4.      A method as claimed in claim 3, comprising the step of determining if the packet is a fragmented packet.


5.      A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said checking step comprises checking if said packet entity contains information relating to the required bearer.

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6.      A method as claimed in claim 4, comprising the step of storing fragmentation related information contained in said packet entity.


7.      A method as claimed in claim 1, comprising the step of receiving another
30   packet entity after a packet entity containing said direction information has been received and directing said another packet entity in accordance with the direction information.

8. A method for directing a plurality of related packet entities to a required address, only one or some of said packet entities containing address related information, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving said plurality of packet entities;

5     determining said required address from at least one of said packet entities containing said address information; and

directing said plurality of related packet entities to said required address.

9. A method as claimed in claim 8, comprising the step of storing at least one

10    packet entity before directing said packet entity to the required address.

10. A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said at least one packet entity is stored until said required address has been determined.

15    11. A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein when at least one packet entity has been stored for a predetermined time and said required address has not been determined, an address to which said at least one packet entity is to be sent is selected and said at least one packet is sent to said selected address.

20    12. A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein when at least one packet entity has been stored for a predetermined time and said required address has not been determined, said at least one packet is removed from a store.

13. A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein if a store storing said at least one

25    packet entity has more than a predetermined amount of data stored therein, an address to which said at least one packet entity is to be sent is selected and said at least one packet is sent to said selected address.

14. A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein if a store storing said at least one

30    packet entity has more than a predetermined amount of data stored therein said at least one packet is removed from said store.

15. A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein information from a header of at least one packet entity is stored.

16. A method as claimed in claim 15, wherein said stored information comprises at least one of the following:
   source address; and identification information.

19. A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein said required address comprises a PDP context and/or one of a plurality of bearers and/or a bearer.

20. A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein said address information comprises said destination address.

21. A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein said packet entities comprise one of packets and packet fragments.

22. Apparatus for directing a plurality of related packet entities to a required address, only one or some of said packet entities containing said address information, said apparatus comprising:
   means for receiving said plurality of packet entities;
   means for determining said required address from at least one of said packet entities containing said address information; and
   means for directing said plurality of related packet entities to said required address.

23. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said apparatus is usable as a node in a packet switched network.

24. Apparatus as claimed in claim 23, wherein said network is a GPRS network.

25. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said apparatus is a GGSN.

26.    A method for directing a packet to a required bearer of a set of bearers, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) receiving the packet;

5    (b)    checking if the packet is a fragmented packet and if it is,

(c)    checking if the packet comprises information related to selection of the correct bearer and if it does,

forwarding the packet to the correct bearer

10    storing fragmentation related information contained in the packet

receiving second packet

forwarding said second packet to the correct bearer based on the fragmentation related information.

and if it does not,

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storing fragmentation related information contained in the packet

storing said packet;

20    receiving another packet containing information related to the selection of the correct bearer

forwarding another packet and the stored packet(s) to the correct bearer.

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